

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A magnetic head disposed on a rotary cylinder rotatable in a predetermined direction, and having a medium sliding surface substantially flush with a peripheral surface of the rotary cylinder, the magnetic head comprising:
 - a first shielding layer composed of a magnetic material;
 - a second shielding layer spaced from the first shielding layer substantially parallel thereto and composed of a magnetic material;
 - a magnetoresistive element provided between the first and second shielding layers and insulated from the first and second shielding layers by a nonmagnetic insulating layer; and
 - a marker layer disposed on a side of the first shielding layer remote from the magnetoresistive element so as to determine the center in a track-width direction of the magnetoresistive element,wherein the layers and the element are exposed from the medium sliding surface while being inclined at a predetermined azimuth angle to the predetermined direction, and
- wherein a major part of the marker layer is disposed inside two imaginary azimuth lines in the track-width direction, the imaginary azimuth lines extending straight in the predetermined direction through both end portions in the track-width direction of the magnetoresistive element, and both end portions of the marker layer are disposed outside

the imaginary azimuth lines in the track-width direction.

2. A magnetic head according to claim 1, wherein the marker layer is positioned so that a head center line
5 extending straight in the predetermined direction through the center in the track-width direction of the magnetoresistive element passes through the center in the track-width direction of the marker layer.

10 3. A magnetic head according to claim 1, wherein the marker layer is positioned so that a normal line extending straight through the center in the track-width direction of the magnetoresistive element in a direction orthogonal to the track-width direction passes through the center in the track-
15 width direction of the marker layer.

4. A magnetic head according to claim 1, wherein the marker layer is composed of a magnetic material.

20 5. A magnetic head according to claim 1, wherein the marker layer is composed of a nonmagnetic material.

6. A magnetic head according to claim 1, wherein the marker layer is in contact with the first shielding layer.
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7. A magnetic head according to claim 1, wherein another nonmagnetic insulating layer is provided between the marker layer and the first shielding layer.

8. A magnetic head according to claim 1, wherein the medium sliding surface extends in the predetermined direction.

9. A magnetic head according to claim 1, wherein the medium sliding surface is curved in a direction orthogonal to the predetermined direction.

10. A tape-medium reading and writing apparatus having a tape loading path in which a magnetic tape medium drawn out of a tape reel is wound on a rotary cylinder that is rotatable in a predetermined direction,

wherein the rotary cylinder has a magnetic head with a medium sliding surface substantially flush with a peripheral surface of the rotary cylinder, the magnetic head comprising:
15 a first shielding layer composed of a magnetic material;
a second shielding layer spaced from the first shielding layer substantially parallel thereto and composed of a magnetic material;

a magnetoresistive element provided between the first and second shielding layers and insulated from the first and second shielding layers by a nonmagnetic insulating layer;
and

a marker layer disposed on a side of the first shielding layer remote from the magnetoresistive element so as to
25 determine the center in a track-width direction of the magnetoresistive element,

wherein the layers and the element are exposed from the medium sliding surface while being inclined at a

predetermined azimuth angle to the predetermined direction,
and

wherein a major part of the marker layer is disposed
inside two imaginary azimuth lines in the track-width

5 direction, the imaginary azimuth lines extending straight in
the predetermined direction through both end portions in the
track-width direction of the magnetoresistive element, and
both end portions of the marker layer are disposed outside
the imaginary azimuth lines in the track-width direction.

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11. A tape-medium reading and writing apparatus
according to claim 10, wherein the marker layer is positioned
so that a head center line extending straight in the
predetermined direction through the center in the track-width
15 direction of the magnetoresistive element passes through the
center in the track-width direction of the marker layer.

12. A tape-medium reading and writing apparatus
according to claim 10, wherein the marker layer is positioned
20 so that a normal line extending straight through the center
in the track-width direction of the magnetoresistive element
in a direction orthogonal to the track-width direction passes
through the center in the track-width direction of the marker
layer.

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13. A tape-medium reading and writing apparatus
according to claim 10, wherein the tape loading path
comprises:

guide posts provided on the upstream and downstream sides of the rotary cylinder to guide the magnetic tape medium drawn out of the tape reel onto the rotary cylinder; and

5 a capstan provided on the downstream side of the rotary cylinder to feed the magnetic tape medium.

14. A tape-medium reading and writing apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the marker layer is composed
10 of a magnetic material.

15 15. A tape-medium reading and writing apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the marker layer is composed of a nonmagnetic material.

16. A tape-medium reading and writing apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the marker layer is in contact with the first shielding layer.

20 17. A tape-medium reading and writing apparatus according to claim 10, wherein another nonmagnetic insulating layer is provided between the marker layer and the first shielding layer.

25 18. A tape-medium reading and writing apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the medium sliding surface extends in the predetermined direction.

19. A tape-medium reading and writing apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the medium sliding surface is curved in a direction orthogonal to the predetermined direction.